

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 221464  
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:WNHOWELL:CF  
APPROVED BY NEA:HSAUNDERS  
NEA - MR DRAPER  
S/S-O :JTHYDEN  
NEA/ARP - MR BURLEIGH  
P - MR NEWSOM (SUBS)

- -  
-----035668 310247Z /23  
O 310212Z AUG 78 ZFF4  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA NIACT IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 221464

EXDIS//FOR AMBASSADOR WEST

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, PINS, LE, SY, IS, SA

SUBJECT: LEBANON SITUATION

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1. FYI. WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED THAT STEADY INCREASE IN  
SYRIAN CONSTRICTION OF SOME CHRISTIAN POSITIONS IN LEBANON  
RAISES SERIOUS THREAT OF ISRAELI INTERVENTION IN SOME FORM  
ON EVE OF CAMP DAVID. SUCH ESCALATION OF LEBANESE CONFLICT  
COULD HAVE MOST SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES FOR WHAT PRESIDENT IS  
TRYING TO ACHIEVE THERE. END FYI.

2. PLEASE SEEK AN URGENT APPOINTMENT WITH SAUD TO DISCUSS WITH HIM RECENT SERIOUS DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING LEBANON WHICH MAY THREATEN AREA STABILITY. IN STRONGLY URGING SAUDI COOPERATION WITH OUR OWN EFFORTS TO CALM SITUATION, USE POINTS IN PARA 3 AS COMING FROM THE SECRETARY PERSONALLY, MAKING CLEAR YOU ARE SPEAKING IN THE SECRETARY'S NAME.

3. -- THE U.S. IS DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON. WITHIN THE LAST WEEK, THERE HAVE BEEN CLASHES BETWEEN SYRIAN FORCES OF THE ADF AND MARONITE MILITIAS IN THE NORTHERN PART OF MOUNT LEBANON, AN AREA WHICH UNTIL THESE INCIDENTS HAD NOT FIGURED IN SYRIAN-MILITIA CLASHES. RELATED TO THOSE CLASHES, OR PERHAPS AS A RESULT OF THEM, NEW OUTBURSTS OF FIGHTING TOOK PLACE IN BEIRUT ALTHOUGH

RELATIVE CALM HAD PREVAILED SINCE EARLIER THIS MONTH. THESE DEVELOPMENTS HAVE GIVEN RISE TO SHARPLY INCREASED CONCERN IN U.S. AND ELSEWHERE THAT SYRIAN INTENTIONS ARE TO CRUSH FINALLY THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL POWER OF THE MARONITE MILITIAS AND THAT THIS COULD LEAD TO WIDER CONFLICT IN THE AREA.

-- THE USG KNOWS THAT THE ROLE OF SYRIAN AND OTHER ADF TROOPS OVER THE PAST MONTHS HAS BEEN A THANKLESS ONE AND THAT THE SYRIANS IN PARTICULAR HAVE HAD TO DEAL WITH MANY PROVOCATIONS AND MANY CRITICISMS. NEVERTHELESS -- AND WE  
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HAVE COMMUNICATED THIS POINT TO THE SYRIANS DIRECTLY -- THE BELIEF HAS GROWN IN MANY QUARTERS THAT SYRIAN FORCES NOW HAVE OBJECTIVES WHICH GO BEYOND THEIR STATED POLICY OF SUPPORT FOR THE UNITY OF LEBANON AND THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT AND PRESERVATION OF SECURITY. DESTRUCTION OF ONE OF THE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE DELICATE POLITICAL BALANCE IN LEBANON CANNOT HELP BUT WORK AGAINST REESTABLISHMENT OF LEBANESE UNITY AND INTEGRITY. IT IS PARTICULARLY URGENT TO ASSURE THAT SYRIA IS NOT REPEAT NOT BENT ON THE FORCEFUL ELIMINATION OF THE MARONITE MILITIAS.

-- THE HUMAN ASPECTS OF THE CONTINUED CONFRONTATION ARE SERIOUS. THE RECENT CLASHES IN THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE TRADITIONAL CHRISTIAN AREA (KOURA, BESHARRE, ETC.) HAVE RESULTED IN PANIC AMONG RESIDENTS THERE REGARDING SYRIAN INTENTIONS. MANY HAVE FLED THE AREAS OF FIGHTING, ADDING TO THE SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF DISPLACED PERSONS IN ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY; MANY ORDINARY LEBANESE CITIZENS ARE LINING UP FOR HOURS AT OUR EMBASSY TO SEEK VISAS.

-- WE BELIEVE THAT PREVAILING ANXIETIES AND APPREHENSIONS ARE ALSO HAVING A POTENTIALLY DAMAGING EFFECT POLITICALLY,

DRIVING MANY ORDINARY CHRISTIANS WITH NO PARTY OR POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS INTO THE ARMS OF MILITARY MARONITE FACTIONS AND INCREASING THE POSSIBILITY THAT THEY WILL ISOLATE THEMSELVES PSYCHOLOGICALLY FROM THE REST OF LEBANON AND THE ARAB WORLD.

-- EXCITEMENT AND CONCERN IN ISRAEL ON THIS QUESTION HAS ALSO REACHED A HIGH PITCH, AND THE USG IS CONCERNED THAT PUBLIC POSITIONS ARE BEING STAKED OUT AND DECISIONS MAY BE TAKEN THAT COULD INCREASE THE RISK OF WIDER CONFLICT OVER LEBANON AT THIS JUNCTURE. THIS WOULD BE A DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS IN THE INTEREST OF NONE OF THE PARTIES AND WHICH, WE BELIEVE, NONE OF THEM DESIRES. THIS COULD HAVE THE MOST SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES FOR THE COMING MEETINGS AT  
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CAMP DAVID WHICH SAUDI ARABIA HAS SUPPORTED.

THE USG, THEREFORE, BELIEVES THAT IMMEDIATE MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN BY ALL PARTIES WITH INFLUENCE ON THE SITUATION IN LEBANON, INCLUDING SAUDI ARABIA, TO END THE MILITARY CLASHES AND PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PASSIONS TO COOL AND FOR POLITICAL ARRANGEMENTS TO BE WORKED OUT. SPECIFICALLY, WE ASK THAT SAUDI ARABIA CONSIDER URGENTLY WHETHER IT WOULD HAVE A CALMING AND POTENTIALLY CONSTRUCTIVE EFFECT FOR SAUDIS TO CONVENE QUICKLY THOSE ARAB GOVERNMENTS MOST DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH STABILITY OF LEBANON TO BRING ABOUT CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES. BEYOND THAT, WE WONDER WHETHER SUCH A GROUP OF ARAB GOVERNMENTS WOULD FIND IT PRODUCTIVE TO CONVOKE REPRESENTATIVES OF MAIN FACTIONS IN LEBANON IN EFFORT TO BRING CIVIL CONFLICT TO AN END AND TO BEGIN REBUILDING LEBANON.

-- WE WOULD APPRECIATE SAUDI VIEWS ON WHAT ELSE MIGHT BE DONE TO KEEP THE SITUATION FROM GETTING OUT OF HAND. WE ARE IN TOUCH WITH THE SYRIANS OURSELVES, BUT WE BELIEVE IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE SAUDIS USE THEIR CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE, PARTICULARLY WITH SYRIA, TO FORESTALL FURTHER MILITARY OPERATIONS.

-- ASIDE FROM HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS AND AN URGENT INTEREST IN PREVENTING AN ESCALATION OF THE LEBANON SITUATION, THE U.S. IS MOVED BY THE CONCERNS OF U.S. CITIZENS, MANY OF WHOM HAVE TIES OF BLOOD OR FRIENDSHIP WITH FAMILIES IN THE AREAS OF RECENT FIGHTING.

-- THE SECRETARY WANTED TO EXPRESS HIS REGRET AT THE NECESSITY OF BRINGING THIS URGENT SITUATION TO YOUR ATTENTION DURING RAMADAN. HE WANTS YOU TO KNOW THAT HE  
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ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

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DRAFTED BY:NEA/ARN:RNEUMANN  
APPROVED BY:NEA/ARN:WNHOWELL  
NEA:AKKORKY  
S/S-O:SJRAPOPORT

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O 010155Z SEP 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE 0000

S E C R E T STATE 221464

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 221464 ACTION JIDDA INFO DAMASCUS  
USUN NEW YORK TEL AVIV JERUSALEM BEIRUT KUWAIT LONDON  
KHARTOUM BONN ABU DHABI PARIS AUGUST 31.

QUOTE: S E C R E T STATE 221464

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UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 31 aug 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**TAGS:** PEPR, MOPS, PINS, LE, SY, IS, SA, US  
**To:** JIDDA DAMASCUS MULTIPLE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
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EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
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